



# भारत का राजपत्र

## The Gazette of India

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EXTRAORDINARY

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PART II—Section I

प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित

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No. 4] NEW DELHI, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1971/MAGHA 19, 1892

इस भाग में भिन्न प्रलेखों की जाती हैं जिससे कि यह अलग संकलन के रूप में रखा जा सके।

Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed  
as a separate compilation

## MINISTRY OF LAW

## Legislative Department

New Delhi, the 8th February, 1971

The following President's Act is published for general information:—

## THE WEST BENGAL LAND REFORMS AMENDMENT

ACT 1971

No. 3 OF 1971

Enacted by the President in the Twenty-second Year of the  
Republic of India.

An Act further to amend the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the West Bengal State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Act, 1970, the President is pleased to enact as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971. Short title  
and com-  
mencement.

(2) The provisions of this Act shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint

and different dates may be appointed for different provisions of this Act, and any reference to the commencement of any provision of this Act shall be construed as referring to the date on which that provision comes into force.

**Amendment of section 2.** **2.** In section 2 of the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act),—  
West Bengal  
Act X  
of 1956.

(i) in clause (2), after the words "to that person", the following shall be inserted, namely:—

"*, and includes a person who under the system generally known as kisani cultivates the land of another person on condition of receiving a share of the produce of such land from that person*";

(ii) in sub-clause (c) of clause (8), after the words "in kind", the brackets and words "(not being as a share of the produce)" shall be inserted.

**Amendment of section 4.** **3.** Sub-section (3) of section 4 of the principal Act shall be omitted.

**Amendment of section 5.** **4.** In section 5 of the principal Act, in the *Explanation*, in clause (b), after the words "usufructuary mortgage", the words "or mortgage by deposit of title deeds" shall be inserted.

**Omission of section 6.** **5.** Section 6 of the principal Act shall be omitted.

**Amendment of section 7.** **6.** In section 7 of the principal Act, in sub-section (1),—

(i) in clause (b), after the words "fifteen years.", the word "or" shall be inserted;

(ii) after clause (b), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

"(c) a mortgage by deposit of title deeds in favour of a scheduled bank, a co-operative land mortgage bank or a corporation, owned or controlled by the Central or State Government, or by both, for the purpose of obtaining loan for the development of land or improvement of agricultural production".

**Amendment of section 8.** **7.** In section 8 of the principal Act,—

(i) in sub-section (1), for the words, brackets and figures "sub-section (3) of section 4", the word, figures and letter "section 14-M" shall be substituted;

(ii) in sub-section (2), in clause (c), the word "usufructuary" shall be omitted.

**8. In section 9 of the principal Act,—**Amendment  
of section 9.

(i) in sub-section (6), for the word "Munsif", wherever it occurs, the words "Additional District Magistrate" shall be substituted;

(ii) after sub-section (6), the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:—

"(7) Every appeal pending before a Munsif at the commencement of section 8 of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971, shall, on such commencement, stand transferred to, and be disposed of by, the Additional District Magistrate having jurisdiction in relation to the area in which the land is situated and on such transfer, every such appeal shall be dealt with from the stage at which it was so transferred and shall be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of this Act, as amended by the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971.”.

**9. In section 10 of the principal Act, in clause (a), after the word "Munsif", the words, figures and brackets "or, after the commencement of section 10" accordance with the provisions of this Act, as amended by the the Additional District Magistrate," shall be inserted.**

**10. In section 14C of the principal Act,—**Amendment  
of section  
14C.

## (i) in sub-section (1),—

(a) in clause (a), for the words "to the same Scheduled Tribe to which the transferor belongs", the words "a Scheduled Tribe" shall be substituted;

(b) after clause (c), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

"(cc) by simple mortgage or mortgage by deposit of title deeds in favour of a scheduled bank, a co-operative land mortgage bank or a corporation, owned or controlled by the Central or State Government, or by both, for the development of land or improvement of agricultural production";

(c) for clause (e), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:—

"(e) by sale or exchange in favour of any person belonging to a Scheduled Tribe:

Provided that any such *raiyat* may, with the previous permission, in writing, of the Revenue Officer, transfer by sale his holding or any part thereof to a person not belonging to any Scheduled Tribe:

Provided further that no such permission shall be granted by the Revenue Officer unless he is satisfied that no purchaser belonging to a Scheduled Tribe is willing to pay the

fair market price of the holding or any part thereof and that the proposed sale is intended to be made for one or more of the following purposes, namely:—

(a) for the improvement of any other part of the holding, or

(b) for investment, or

(c) for such other purposes as may be prescribed.”;

(ii) sub-section (2) shall be omitted.

Amendment  
of section  
14E.

**11.** In section 14E of the principal Act, in sub-section (1),—

(i) after the words, figures and letter “provisions of section 14C”, the words “, or if the permission for the transfer is found, after an inquiry in the prescribed manner, to have been obtained by misrepresentation or fraud” shall be inserted;

(ii) the words, brackets and letter “or clause (e)”, wherever they occur, shall be omitted;

(iii) after the words “by an order in writing”, the words “annul the transfer, where necessary, and” shall be inserted.

Amendment  
of section  
14H.

**12.** In section 14H of the principal Act, for the figures and letter “14C”, the figures, letters and words “14C or section 14E” shall be substituted.

Insertion  
of new  
Chapter II-B.

**13.** After Chapter IIA of the principal Act, the following Chapter shall be inserted, namely:—

## ‘CHAPTER II-B

### CEILING ON HOLDINGS

Provisions  
of Chapter  
II-B to  
over-ride  
other pro-  
visions of  
law.

Definitions.

**14-J.** The provisions of this Chapter shall have effect notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained elsewhere in this Act or in any other law for the time being in force.

**14-K.** In this Chapter,—

(a) “ceiling area” means the extent of land which a *raiyat* shall be entitled to own;

(b) “charitable purpose” includes relief of the poor, medical relief or the advancement of education or of any other object of general public utility;

(c) “family”, in relation to a *raiyat*, shall be deemed to consist of—

(i) himself and his wife, minor sons, unmarried daughters, if any,

(ii) his unmarried adult son, if any, who does not hold any land as a *raiyat*,

(iii) his married adult son, if any, where neither such adult son nor the wife nor any minor son or unmarried daughter of such adult son holds any land as a *raiyat*,

(iv) widow of his pre-deceased son, if any, where neither such widow nor any minor son or unmarried daughter of such widow holds any land as a *raiyat*,

(v) minor son or unmarried daughter, if any, of his pre-deceased son, where the widow of such pre-deceased son is dead and any minor son or unmarried daughter of such pre-deceased son does not hold land as a *raiyat*,

but shall not include any other person.

*Explanation I.*—For the purposes of this Chapter, an adult unmarried person shall include a man or woman who has been divorced and who has not remarried thereafter:

Provided that where such divorced man or woman is the guardian of any minor son, or unmarried daughter, or both, he or she, together with such minor son or unmarried daughter, or both, shall be deemed to be a separate family.

*Explanation II.*—References in this clause to wife, son or daughter shall, in relation to a *raiyat* who is a woman, be construed as references to the husband, son or daughter, respectively, of such woman;

(d) "irrigated area" means an area specified as such by the State Government, by notification in the Official Gazette, being an area which is, or is in the opinion of the State Government capable of being, irrigated, at any time during the agricultural year commencing on the 1st day of *Baisakh*, 1377 B.S., from any State canal irrigation project or State (power driven deep tube-well) irrigation project;

(e) "orchard" means a compact area of land having fruit bearing trees grown thereon in such number that they preclude, or when fully grown would preclude, a substantial part of such land from being used for any agricultural purpose;

(f) "standard hectare" means,—

(i) in relation to an agricultural land, an extent of land equivalent to—

(a) 1·00 hectare in an irrigated area,

(b) 1·40 hectare in any other area;

(ii) in relation to any land comprised in an orchard, an extent of land equivalent to 1·40 hectare.

14-L. On and from the commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, no *raiyat* shall be entitled to own, in the aggregate, any land in excess of the ceiling area applicable to him under section 14-M.

14-M. (1) The ceiling area shall be,—

Ceiling area.

(a) in the case of a *raiyat*, who is an adult unmarried person, 2·50 standard hectares;

(b) in the case of a *raiyat*, who is the sole surviving member of a family, 2·50 standard hectares;

(c) in the case of a *raiyat* having a family consisting of two or more, but not more than five members, 5·00 standard hectares;

(d) in the case of a *raiyat* having a family consisting of more than five members, 5·00 standard hectares, plus 0·50 standard hectare for each member in excess of five, so, however, that the aggregate of the ceiling area for such *raiyat* shall not, in any case, exceed 7·00 standard hectares;

(e) in the case of any other *raiyat*, 7·00 standard hectares.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where, in the family of a *raiyat*, there are more *raiyats* than one, the ceiling area for the *raiyat*, together with the ceiling area of all the other *raiyats* in the family shall not, in any case, exceed,—

(a) where the number of members of such family does not exceed five, 5·00 standard hectares;

(b) where such number exceeds five, 5·00 standard hectares, plus 0·50 standard hectare for each member in excess of five, so, however, that the aggregate of the ceiling area shall not, in any case, exceed 7·00 standard hectares.

(3) For the purposes of sub-section (2), all the lands owned individually by the members of a family or jointly by some or all the members of such family shall be deemed to be owned by the *raiyats* in the family.

(4) In determining the extent of land owned by the *raiyats* in a family or the sole surviving member of a family or an adult unmarried person, the share of such *raiyat* or *raiyats*, or such sole surviving member, or such adult unmarried person, as the case may be, in the lands owned by a co-operative society, company, co-operative farming society, Hindu undivided family or a firm shall be taken into account.

*Explanation.*—For the purposes of this sub-section, the share of a *raiyat* in a family or the sole surviving member of a family or an adult unmarried person in the lands owned by a co-operative society or a joint family shall be deemed to be the extent of land which would be allotted to such *raiyat* or person had such lands been divided or partitioned, as the case may be.

(5) The lands owned by a private trust, endowment or institution shall be deemed to be lands owned by the *raiyat* creating the trust or endowment or establishing the institution, as the case may be, or, if he is not alive, by his successors-in-interest.

(2) The State Government shall prescribe such authority as it may think fit for the determination of the question referred to in sub-section (1).

14-O. (1) Any person who is aggrieved by any determination made by the prescribed authority under section 14-N may, within thirty days from the date of such determination or within such further time as the appellate authority may, on sufficient cause being shown, allow, prefer an appeal to such authority as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify in this behalf, against such determination.

(2) On receipt of such appeal, the appellate authority may, after giving a reasonable opportunity to the appellant of being heard, confirm, modify or reverse the determination made by the prescribed authority.

14-P. In determining the ceiling area, any land which was transferred, by sale, gift or otherwise or partitioned, by a *raiayat* after the 7th day of August, 1969, but before the date of publication, in the Official Gazette, of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971, shall be taken into account as if such land had not been transferred or partitioned, as the case may be.

Land transferred after  
7th August,  
1969, to be  
taken into  
account for  
determining  
the ceiling  
area.

14-Q. (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (2), the ceiling area for a co-operative society, company, co-operative farming society, Hindu undivided family or a firm, as the case may be, shall not exceed the sum total of the ceiling areas of each member of such co-operative society, company, co-operative farming society, Hindu undivided family or each partner of such firm:

Ceiling  
area in  
special  
cases.

Provided that for the purpose of determining the ceiling area referred to in this sub-section, any land held separately by a person, who is a member of a co-operative society, company, co-operative farming society or Hindu undivided family or a partner of a firm, shall be deducted from the ceiling area referred to in section 14-M, so that the sum total of the area of land held by such person, whether as such member or partner or individually or as a member of a family, may not, in any case, exceed the ceiling area applicable to him under section 14-M.

(2) Where a *raiayat* owns land comprised in orchards, whether or not in addition to other land, the ceiling area in relation to such *raiayat* shall be increased by 2.00 standard hectares or the actual area of the land comprised in orchards, whichever is the lesser.

(3) If the State Government, after having regard to all the circumstances of the case, is satisfied that a corporation or institution established exclusively for a charitable or religious purpose, or both, or a person holding any land in trust, or in pursuance of any other endowment, creating a legal obligation exclusively for a purpose which is charitable or religious, or both, requires land, as distinct from the income derived from such land, for the due performance of its obligations, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, increase the ceiling area for such corporation or institution or person to such extent as it may think fit.

**Exemption.**

14-R. The provisions of section 14-M shall not apply—

(a) to any land owned as a *raiyat* by a local authority or any body or authority constituted or established by or under any law for the time being in force;

(b) for such period as may be specified by the State Government, by notification in the Official Gazette, to any land in such hilly portion of the district of Darjeeling as may be specified in the said notification.

**Vesting of land in excess of ceiling area**

14-S. (1) On the commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, any land owned by a *raiyat* in excess of the ceiling area applicable to him shall vest in the State free from all incumbrances.

(2) Where any land vested in the State under sub-section (1) is being cultivated by a *bargadar*, the right of cultivation of such *bargadar* in relation to any such vested land which is in excess of 1.00 hectare, including any other land owned or cultivated by him, shall, on the commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, stand terminated.

(3) Every *bargadar* shall, in relation to the land which he is authorised by sub-section (1) to retain under his cultivation, become, on and from the date of commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, a *raiyat*.

**Duty of raiyat to furnish return.**

14-T. (1) Every *raiyat* owning land in excess of the ceiling area shall furnish to the Revenue Officer, in such form and within such time as may be prescribed, a return containing the full description of the land which he proposes to retain within the ceiling area applicable to him under section 14-M and a full description of the land which is in excess of the ceiling area and such other particulars as may be prescribed.

(2) Where there are more *raiyats* than one in a family, the return referred to in sub-section (1) shall be furnished by the head of the family or any other *raiyat* in accordance with the provisions of that sub-section.

(3) The Revenue Officer may, on receipt of a return submitted under sub-section (1) or sub-section (2), or on his own motion, determine the extent of land which is to vest in the State under section 14-S and take possession of such lands.

(4) If a *raiyat* fails to furnish, without any reasonable excuse, the return referred to in sub-section (1), or sub-section (2), within the prescribed time or wilfully makes any omission or incorrect statement in such return, he shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

**Restriction on transfer of land by a raiyat.**

14-U. (1) Except where he is permitted, in writing, by the Revenue Officer so to do, a *raiyat* owning land in excess of the ceiling area applicable to him under section 14-M, shall not, after the publication, in the Official Gazette, of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971, transfer, by sale, gift or otherwise or make any partition of any land owned by him or any part thereof until the excess land, which is to vest in the State under section 14-S, has been determined and taken possession of by or on behalf of the State.

(2) If a *raiyat* makes any transfer, whether by sale, gift or otherwise, of any land in contravention of the provisions of sub-section (1), the State Government may, in the first instance, take posses-

sion of land, equal in area to the land which is to vest in the State, from out of the land owned by such *raiyat*, and where such recovery from the *raiyat* is not possible, from the transferee:

Provided that where the transferee is a person who is eligible for allotment of surplus land in accordance with the provisions of this Act, the State Government may, instead of enforcing its right to recover the land or an equal amount of land, recover from the transferor the amount which he had received as consideration for the transfer of such land.

(3) Any *raiyat* who transfers any land in contravention of the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be punishable with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees, or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with both.

14-V. The principles on which, and the manner in which, compensation for the vesting of any land in the State under the provisions of this Chapter is to be determined and given shall be such as are specified in Chapter III of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act, 1953.

14-W. (1) A *raiyat* who possesses, after the commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, any land in excess of the ceiling area shall be liable to pay to the State Government, for the period for which he has possessed such land, such compensation for the use and occupation of such land as the Collector may fix in the prescribed manner.

(2) Any sum payable by a *raiyat* as damages for use and occupation of any land shall be recoverable as a public demand.

14-X. No Civil Court shall have jurisdiction to decide or deal with any question or to determine any matter which is by or under this Chapter required to be decided or dealt with or to be determined by the Revenue Officer or other authority specified therein and no orders passed or proceedings commenced under the provisions of this Chapter shall be called in question in any Civil Court.

14-Y. (1) If any *raiyat* acquires any land, whether by transfer, inheritance or otherwise, after the commencement of the provisions of this Chapter, and such land, together with the land owned by him, exceeds the ceiling area applicable to him under section 14-M, the area of land which is in excess of such ceiling area, shall vest in the State and the provisions of section 14-S shall apply to such land.

(2) The compensation for the land so vested in the State shall be determined and given in accordance with the provisions of section 14-V.'

14. In section 16 of the principal Act, for sub-section (6), the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely :—

"(6) Where any produce is deposited under sub-section (4) and the person for whom the produce has been deposited does not take delivery of such produce within fifteen days from the date of service on him of the intimation of such deposit, the officer or authority referred to in sub-section (4) may sell such produce and deposit the proceeds of such sale, after deducting therefrom the cost of conducting the sale, in the treasury, in revenue deposit, to the credit of the

person for whom the produce has been deposited and give intimation of such deposit to such person, in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed.”.

**Amendment  
of section 17.**

**15. In section 17 of the principal Act,—**

(i) in sub-section (1),—

(a) in the first proviso to clause (d), for the figures “3·0351”, the figures “3·00” shall be substituted;

(b) in the second proviso, for the figures “0·8094”, the figures “1·00” shall be substituted;

(ii) in sub-sections (4) and (5), for the words “twenty-five acres”, wherever they occur, the figures and word “6·00 hectares” shall be substituted;

(iii) after sub-section (5), the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely :—

“(6) Where any land cultivated by a *bargadar* is in excess of the limit specified in sub-section (4), the person whose land is cultivated by such *bargadar* shall, if the excess land is within the ceiling area applicable to such person in accordance with the provisions of Chapter II-B, have the land cultivated by any person referred to in section 49 who is willing to cultivate the said land as a *bargadar*.”.

**Insertion  
of new  
section 20B.**

**16. After section 20A of the principal Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely :—**

**Surrender  
or abandon-  
ment by  
*bargadar*.**

“20B. (1) If a *bargadar*—

(a) surrenders his right to cultivate in relation to any land cultivated by him as a *bargadar*, or

(b) voluntarily abandons cultivation of such land, the person, whose land was cultivated by the *bargadar*, may give information in writing of such surrender or abandonment to the officer or authority appointed under sub-section (1) of section 18, having jurisdiction in the area in which such land is situated.

(2) On receipt of such information, such officer or authority shall issue a notice, in the prescribed form, to the *bargadar*, and after giving the *bargadar* and the person whose land was cultivated by the *bargadar*, an opportunity of being heard and making such inquiries as he or it may deem necessary, determine whether the *bargadar* had voluntarily surrendered or abandoned his right of cultivation in relation to such land.

(3) If such officer or authority determines that the *bargadar* had not voluntarily surrendered or abandoned the cultivation of the land which was being cultivated by him as such and that he had been compelled by force or otherwise to surrender or abandon the cultivation of such land, such officer or authority shall restore the *bargadar* to the cultivation of the land, or where the *bargadar* is not

available or is not willing to be restored to the cultivation of such land, the person whose land was so cultivated shall not resume personal cultivation of the land but he may, with the permission of such officer or authority, get the land cultivated by any person, referred to in section 49, who is willing to cultivate the land as a *bargadar*.

(4) If such officer or authority determines that the *bargadar* had voluntarily surrendered or abandoned the cultivation of the land which was cultivated by him as such, the person whose land was being so cultivated shall not resume personal cultivation of such land but he may, with the permission of such officer or authority, have the land cultivated by any person, referred to in section 49, who is willing to cultivate the land as a *bargadar*.

(5) Any contravention of the provisions of sub-section (3) or sub-section (4) shall be an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.”.

17. In section 43 of the principal Act, in sub-section (3), for the words “exceeds twenty-five acres so long as he continues to be a member of the society”, the words, figures and letter “exceeds the ceiling area applicable to him under Chapter II-B” shall be substituted.

18. In section 49 of the principal Act,—

Amendment  
of section  
49.

(i) for the words “two acres”, the figures and word “1.00 hectare” shall be substituted;

(ii) after the proviso, the following proviso shall be inserted, namely:—

“Provided further that settlement of any such lands may be made with other persons where such settlement is, in the opinion of the State Government, necessary for a public purpose connected with agriculture on such terms and conditions as the State Government may think fit.”.

19. In section 51A of the principal Act, in sub-section (5), for the words, figures and letter “a Special Judge appointed under section 51D for the purpose of this section”, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“the Additional District Magistrate of the district in which the land is situated:

Provided that every appeal pending before a Special Judge appointed under section 51D at the commencement of section 19 of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971, shall, on such commencement, stand transferred to, and be disposed of by, the Additional District Magistrate and on such transfer, every such appeal shall be dealt with from the stage at which it was so transferred and shall be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of this Act, as amended by the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971.”.

Omission  
of section  
51D.

**20.** Section 51D of the principal Act shall be omitted.

Insertion  
of new  
section 53A.

**21.** After section 53 of the principal Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely:—

Revenue  
Officer  
to be a  
necessary  
party in all  
suits, etc.

“53A. Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in this Act or in any law for the time being in force, the Revenue Officer having jurisdiction in the area in which any land is situated shall be a necessary party to all suits of a civil nature relating to any such land or portion thereof in which one of the parties to the suit is a member of any Scheduled Tribe and the other party is not a member of any Scheduled Tribe.”.

Amendment  
of section  
54.

**22.** Section 54 of the principal Act shall be re-numbered as sub-section (1) thereof, and—

(i) in sub-section (1), as so re-numbered, clause (c) and the proviso thereto shall be omitted;

(ii) after sub-section (1), as so re-numbered, the following sub-sections shall be inserted, namely:—

“(2) Where, at the commencement of section 22 of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1971, any appeal is pending before the Member, Board of Revenue, such appeal shall, notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), be disposed of by such Member.

(3) Where any appeal is preferred to a Collector of the district, he may transfer the appeal to any officer subordinate to him, not being below the rank of a Sub-Deputy Collector:

Provided that the officer to whom the appeal is transferred is superior in rank or position to the officer or authority making the order appealed from.

(4) An order passed in appeal shall be final.”.

Amendment  
of section  
55.

**23.** In section 55 of the principal Act,—

(i) in clause (a), after the word “Collector”, the words “or to the Additional District Magistrate” shall be inserted;

(ii) clause (c) shall be omitted.

V. V. GIRI,

*President.*

N. D. P. NAMBOODIRIPAD,

*Jt. Secy. to the Govt. of India.*

*Reasons for the enactment*

The West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 includes provision for imposing ceiling on the extent of land which an individual *raiyat* may own and such ceiling has been fixed at 25 acres. This provision is also not applicable to lands comprised in orchards as well as lands held by religious and charitable institutions, trusts and endowments, which the intermediaries were permitted to retain under the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act, 1953. After giving careful consideration to the various aspects of land reform measures, which are necessary in the interests of social justice as also of agricultural production, it has been decided to amend the provisions of the West Bengal Land Reforms Act with a view to imposing ceiling on family basis on the aggregate area of land held by all the *raiyyats* in a family and modifying the provisions relating to exemptions with regard to orchards and lands held by religious and charitable institutions, trusts and endowments. It has also been considered necessary to reduce the level of ceiling and impose different levels of ceiling in regard to lands in irrigated areas and lands in other areas. Opportunity has also been taken to further safeguard the interests of share-croppers, *raiyyats* and tribal *raiyyats*. The present measure is being enacted to achieve the above objectives.

2. The Committee constituted under the proviso to sub-section (2) of section 3 of the West Bengal State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Act, 1970 (17 of 1970) has been consulted before enactment of this measure as a President's Act.

T. P. SINGH,

*Secy. to the Govt. of India,*

*Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community  
Development and Co-operation  
(Department of Agriculture).*

